



## Preserve Today, Relish Tomorrow

### UCCE Master Food Preservers of El Dorado County

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## Freezing Food In Canning Jars

Zero-waste is a noble goal. I try to reduce my use of single use containers and plastics.

An article appeared on my Facebook newsfeed. A person said they freeze about 400 portions of food for the family every August. This time they wanted to go "no-waste" and froze the food in canning jars. Because they failed to take the time to understand how to use canning jars for freezing they lost a lot of product due to cracked jars. You can read the whole article here:

<https://www.thekitchn.com/meal-prep-mistake-freezer-reddit-22952780>

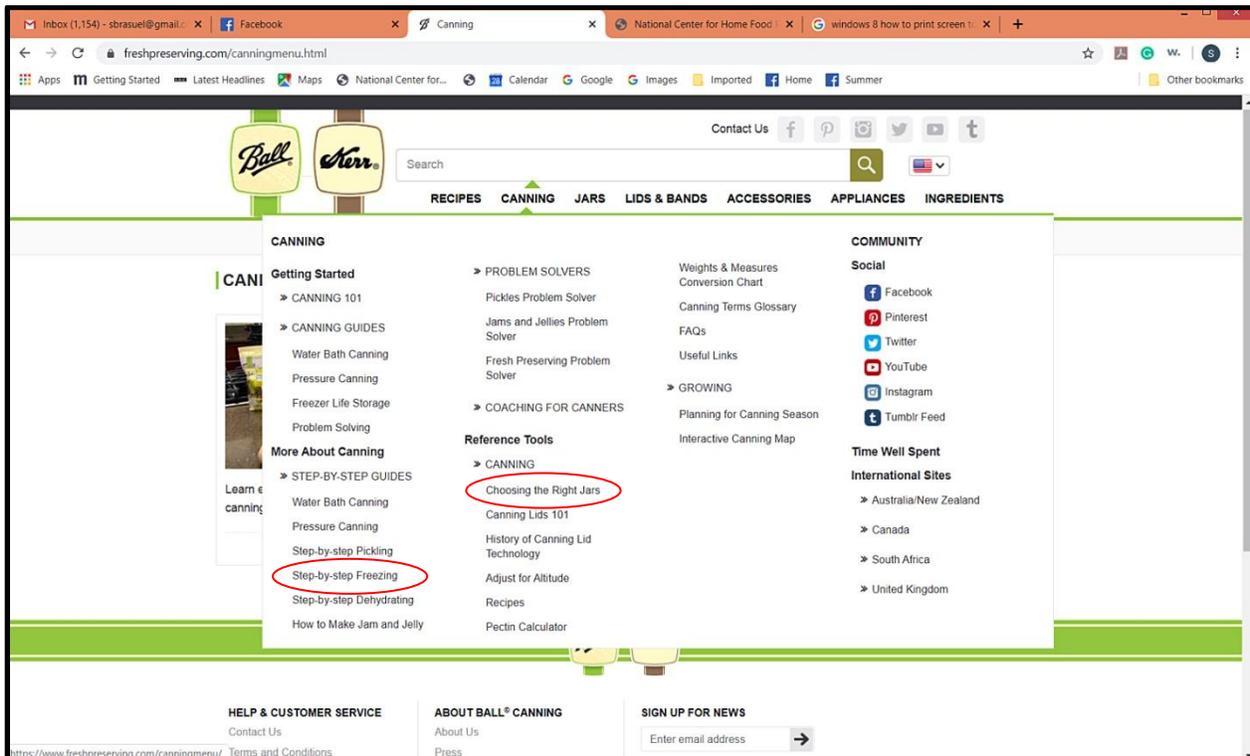
Considering we are in the Information Age and "Google is our friend", there is really no reason this should be happening. So, where do we find this information?

My first thought was, "read the directions" so I looked on a Ball and a Kerr box. As many may know, the directions for canning are on the bottom of the boxes. But is there information about freezing on the box, too? The answer is yes, but it is buried in the text on the side of the box, and not easy to find. It took me several tries before I found it. It sure would be nice if it simply said "recommended for freezing" or "not recommended for freezing" in a prominent place.

Next, I went to the Ball website, [freshpreserving.com](http://freshpreserving.com). Ball has all the information, but it takes several clicks to find the info. The freezing info is under "Canning" on the main page banner. Hover your mouse over Canning, then under Reference Tools click on Choosing the Right Jars

Another place for the information, again under "Canning" is to click on More About Canning

***\*\*\* Note: the Ball mobile app is even more convoluted. Finding the info on your phone is time consuming and frustrating.***



The other obvious place to look is the Nation Center For Home Food Preservation  
<https://nchfp.uga.edu/index.html>

The information is under "How Do I?" Then click on Freeze/ General Information.  
[https://nchfp.uga.edu/how/gen\\_freeze.html](https://nchfp.uga.edu/how/gen_freeze.html)

Summary:

There are 3 basic types of canning jars; regular mouth, wide-mouth, and multi-use wide mouth.  
<https://www.freshpreserving.com/choosing-the-right-jars.html>

Regular mouth jars are not recommended for freezing because of the shoulders. As we know, when liquid freezes it expands. Therefore it is critical that enough headspace is available to allow for this expansion. However, even leaving plenty of headspace the regular mouth jars can crack. This happens if the product below the shoulders of the regular mouth jars expands and puts too much pressure on those shoulders and cannot expand up through the neck of the jar.

<b>General Freezing Information</b>				
<b>Headspace to Allow Between Packed Food and Closure</b>				
<b>Type of Pack</b>	<b>Container with wide top opening</b>		<b>Container with narrow top opening</b>	
	<b>Pint</b>	<b>Quart</b>	<b>Pint</b>	<b>Quart</b>
Liquid Pack*	½ inch	1 inch	¾ inch	1 ½ inch
Dry Pack**	½ inch	½ inch	½ inch	½ inch
Juices	½ inch	1 inch	1 ½ inch	1 ½ inch

\*Fruit packed in juice, sugar, syrup or water; crushed or pureéd fruit.  
 \*\*Fruit or vegetable packed without added sugar or liquid.

Wide-mouth jars are safe for freezing, but adequate headspace is still required for the expansion of the frozen product.

There are also multi-use wide-mouth jars that are actually made for both canning and freezing.

Be careful thawing glass jars full of frozen food. Let the food thaw in the refrigerator. Heating the glass jar too quickly can cause the jar to break. Take some time to read this short article about thawing prepared foods.

<https://nchfp.uga.edu/how/freeze/thawing.html>

Don't waste food, don't waste jars, don't waste your time. Do your homework!



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